



# Duke University Medical Center

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**LENDING AN ARM TO A LEADING LADY**—Ned Kearns meets a lot of nice people in his job of assistant to the vice president for health affairs in the area of patient relations, but it's not every day he acts as escort to the likes of actress Helen Hayes. Miss Hayes was a patient here for some tests a couple of days last month and struck this pose with Kearns as she was leaving the hospital to return to her home in New York. She had been in North Carolina addressing a fund raising dinner in Southern Pines for the Comprehensive Cancer Center. (Photo by Parker Herring)

## Research, education priorities, Cancer Society president says

By William Erwin

The new national president of the American Cancer Society (ACS) says the organization will continue to stress education and research rather than try to end federal price supports for tobacco.

"Lobbying and influencing legislation are not important activities for us," said Dr. R. Wayne Rundles, professor of medicine here.

At the same time, however, Rundles made it clear that he's not soft on the subject of smoking and cancer, saying that "the best way to avoid lung cancer is not to smoke."

Rundles was named national ACS president Nov. 12 at the annual meeting of the society's board of directors in New York City. He had served as president-elect during the past year.

A member of the Comprehensive Can-



DR. RUNDLES

cer Center faculty, the new president was the nation's first scientist to develop an effective treatment for one type of multiple myeloma, a cancer of the bone marrow.

In an interview here, Rundles talked about the problem of cancer, past and present.

"Many people around the country have been disappointed at the slow progress made in controlling cancer," he said. "Some have underestimated the complexity of the problem, and others are not aware of the progress that has been made."

### Better prognosis

Hodgkin's disease, the professor said, once was labeled an invariably fatal form of cancer.

"Now upwards of 40 to 50 per cent of patients with Hodgkin's disease are cured," he said. "The others may live five, 10 or more years with their disease under control."

Advances also have been made against the most common form of leukemia,

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## Student develops respiratory pacemaker

By David Williamson

A 20-year-old Duke coed has developed a respiratory pacemaker that Duke neurosurgeons believe may soon help some patients with severe neck injuries breathe more easily while hospitalized.

Carolyn Cohen, a senior from Chevy Chase, Md., almost dropped out of the biomedical engineering program two years ago because she felt some introductory courses were too vague and theoretical.

But later courses in medical instrumentation, electronics and circuitry sparked an interest that may last all her life, she says.

### Gives nerves a boost

Her device is called a phrenic nerve stimulator, and its purpose is to give an electronic boost to the nerves that cause muscles of the diaphragm to contract and draw air into the lungs.

Traditional "positive pressure" respirators, which force air through tubes into the lungs, keep alive accident victims whose phrenic nerves have been damaged, but have several disadvantages, Cohen explained.

The bulky tubes prevent speech and also carry a substantial risk of respiratory infection. And because diaphragm muscles are not contracting, their tissue tends to waste away during long months in the hospital.

"Our stimulator will be used with patients as soon as they have stabilized after their accidents, before these

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**GETTING ADJUSTED**—Duke University Engineering student Carolyn Cohen demonstrates how a respiratory pacemaker she designed and constructed will be attached to paralyzed patients to help them breathe more easily in the hospital. The device, already proven effective in

animal studies, will be tested on humans early next year. Robert Leech, a computer programmer with the Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development, serves as her model. (Photo by Jim Wallace)